

define a disease or condition, patient variables, detail a therapeutic protocol (individualized or not) and placebo, and demonstrate repeatable and sustainable responses? The pet-owning public is hungry for answers, and so are we. Show us the proof!

In conclusion, we conducted a real life study on an over-the-counter homeopathic remedy following the manufacturer's recommendations, and the remedy was found wanting. If we have touched a nerve, we can only hope that this will stimulate homeopaths to design

their own studies and get them published in peer-reviewed journals. They owe it to our profession.

*Danny W. Scott, DVM, DipACVD
William H. Miller, Jr., VMD, DipACVD
Department of Clinical Sciences
College of Veterinary Medicine
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York 14853-6401, USA*

◆◆◆

Study defies the most basic tenets of homeopathy

Dear Sir,

The study using the homeopathic remedy for canine atopic dermatitis (Can Vet J 2002;43:601–603) demonstrates a lack of understanding of the basic founding principles of homeopathy. I respectfully add that I was surprised and disappointed that this study was published in a peer-reviewed journal such as the CVJ.

I wonder if a veterinarian formally trained in homeopathy was one of the “peers” in the review process of this paper, for if there had been, it is unlikely that it would have been published, and radical changes to trial design would probably have been suggested.

This study defies the most basic tenets of homeopathy, that is, the use of the law of similars in choosing a remedy, and the use of a minimum dose of a single remedy.

Unlike conventional medicine, in which one looks for what is the same between patients then applies a uniform treatment for that disease; in homeopathy, one looks for what is different between patients. In homeopathy, the treatment approach is individualized, based on the total-

ity of detailed clinical signs that are uniquely expressed, and the whole patient is treated, not just the disease.

In this study, the authors did not look beyond the common sign of pruritus. A veterinary homeopath would discover that one itchy dog may have had pustular eruptions with yellow discharge, was worse with bathing, was timid with strangers, was afraid of loud noises, was chilly, and had increased thirst and cravings to eat dirt, whereas another itchy dog may have had completely normal skin; itching ameliorated by bathing; chronic constipation; a small wart at its anus; a mild, left-sided green nasal discharge; and a history of vaccine reactions.

The above 2 dogs would have required 2 different remedies, possibly different potencies (strengths) and different time-lines to assess response for the second prescription (which could be a different remedy from the first.) In this study, all 21 dogs received the identical formula, which is essentially inappropriate homeopathic prescribing. This is akin to doing a clinical trial

**It's not a Breadmaker !!!!
But gives you enough bread to buy one**

**H
O
W
?**

**Purchase the CBC Analyzer
scil Vet for \$ 14,094.00***

+

Receive 2 YEARS FREE Reagents

+

**Receive \$ 2,000.00 TRADE-IN for
your CBC Analyzer**



*purchase price after Trade-in



**Interested ?
- give us a call!**

Our distributor



**1-800-668-2368
or the scil branch
office in Canada:
1-866-381-4333**

using insulin as the drug of choice for pain control in osteoarthritis!

An over-the-counter combination formula of 5 remedies was used in the study by Scott et al. Combination remedies are frowned upon in classical homeopathy, since they lack the “provings” that have been done for single remedies. Remedies mixed together actually form a completely new medicine, whose effects are likely unknown.

The typical blinded, randomized, placebo-controlled clinical trial is made for the allopathic medical model, where the “problem” is usually reduced down to a single diagnosis and treated uniformly with the same medicine. However, homeopathy, with its highly detailed and individualized approach to the patient’s mental, emotional, and physical states, clearly pushes the boundaries of acceptable scientific enquiry in the form of the stan-

dard clinical trial. Perhaps it is time for the veterinary profession to stretch the boundaries of its “own mind” and seek creative ways to fairly and accurately assess the merits of an unusual and powerful healing modality, namely, homeopathy.

*Laura Taylor, DVM
Sundance Animal Hospital
35 Sunmills Drive S.E.
Calgary, Alberta T2X 2W6
(403) 283-0109
holisticvet@shaw.ca*

Editor’s comment: Hindsight is always 20/20! The challenge would be to select an appropriate reviewer, since, generally, veterinary homeopaths do not publish their case reports.

INDEX OF ADVERTISERS INDEX DES ANNONCEURS

Alan Donald.....987	Palliser Animal Health Laboratories Ltd.988
Ayerst Veterinary Laboratories Inc.976	PetLynx Corporation.....922, 925, 928, 974
Boehringer Ingelheim Canada Ltd.948, 949	Pfizer Animal Health Inc.903, 979
Chieftain Marketing.....988	Pottruff & Smith Insurance Brokers Inc.988
Clark Cages, Inc.967	Practice One Management Consultants988
DVM Technologies906	Schering-Plough Animal Health, Inc.904
EffectiVet.....987	Scil Animal Health.....911
EIDAP Inc.988	Terry A. Jackson987
Eville & Jones982	Thornell Corporation987
Gallant Custom Laboratories Inc.987	Travis and Associates984
Hill’s Pet Nutrition Canada, Inc.OBC	Université de Montréal.....982
Hoptech Inc.988	University of Prince Edward Island986
Ideal Instrument.....988	University of Saskatchewan983
IDEXX Laboratories Inc.IBC	University of Tennessee985
Lebalab Inc.987	University of Vermont985
Lois M. Onley988	Vet-Surge987
Novartis Animal Health Inc.IFC	VetLaw.....987

The participation of advertisers in the CVJ is an indication of their commitment to the advancement of veterinary medicine in Canada. We encourage our readers to give their products and services appropriate consideration. — Ed.

Le support des annonceurs démontre leur engagement pour l'avancement de la médecine vétérinaire au Canada. Nous vous encourageons à prendre connaissance de leurs services et produits. — NDLR